

# VOX NOSTRA

Vol XII

FEBRUARY 2024

No. 2

*Dear Rev. Fathers, Rev. Deacons, Brothers and Sisters,*

## 1. SEASON OF LENT

We begin the holy season of Lent on **14 February 2024** with the celebration of Ash Wednesday. Lent is a time of preparation for the celebration of Easter. It is also a time of grace to return to God from our sinfulness and experience His unconditional and forgiving love. “The temptations of Jesus in the desert recapitulate the temptation of Adam in Paradise and the temptations of Israel in the desert. Satan tempts Jesus in regard to his obedience to the mission given him by the Father. Christ, the new Adam, resists and his victory proclaims that of his passion which is the supreme obedience of his filial love. The Church unites herself to this mystery in a special way in the liturgical season of Lent” (CCCC, #106). Lenten penance is a commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the cross.

It is heartening to note that our faithful do enter this season of Lent with great devotion, reverence and faith. Hence, I exhort the Parish Priests to continue to organize the usual para-liturgical devotions in practice during Lent and promote them: Daily Way of the Cross, Reading of the Passion narrative, its reflection and meditation in families uniting themselves to the suffering, passion, and death of Jesus Christ. As part of Year of Prayer 2024, let us also catechise the faithful on Christian meaning of prayer and on the importance of prayer in Christian life and

exhort them also to participate in daily Eucharist. May the season of Lent also inspire us to stay away from all external celebrations and practise the acts of penance, fast and abstinence. I take this occasion to wish all of you, dear Rev. Fathers, Deacons, Brothers and Sisters, a holy and prayerful season of Lent.

## **2. DAY OF CONSECRATED LIFE**

We celebrate the feast of the Presentation of the Lord on **02 February 2024**. This celebration commemorates the presentation of Jesus by Blessed Virgin Mary, His mother, to the Lord in the Temple. The liturgy of the day invites us to organize the blessing of candles and the faithful coming into the Church in a procession, holding lighted candles in their hands, proclaiming Christ as the light of the world.

The Church invites us to celebrate this day as the Day of the Consecrated life. I request you, dear Fathers, to apprise your faithful of the significance of the Consecrated Life which involves a life set apart for God in the Church which needs to be promoted, encouraged, and appreciated because the Religious Men and Women, being an integral part of the Church, play a very constructive role in building the Church and the People of God. On my behalf, I express my gratitude and appreciation to all Religious Men and Women who are rendering their dedicated service in the Diocese of Udipi as per their charisms, contributing thereby to the growth of our local Church. Let us keep all of them in our prayers.

## **3. MISSIONARY HOLY CHILDHOOD DAY**

The second Sunday of February, this year the 11th, is celebrated as the **Missionary Holy Childhood Day**. The aims of the Missionary Childhood Association are: 1. To meet the spiritual and material needs of all children, so that they can live worthily as true children of God. 2. To sensitize children regarding the needs of others by teaching them the

value of solidarity and mutual support. 3. To instill a missionary spirit in children that will accompany them throughout their lives, regardless of whether God will guide them towards lay or religious lives, making them valid and responsible members of society. I exhort all parish priests to celebrate this day meaningfully and help the children in their contribution in their own tiny way to the mission of the Church. I hereby appeal to all of you to motivate them further to be effective signs of the Church’s mission by organizing activities and celebrations that will suit their age and enthusiasm.

**4. WORLD DAY OF THE SICK**

February 11 is the **World Day of the Sick**, an observation started by Pope St John Paul II as a way for believers to offer prayers for those suffering from illnesses. The day coincides with the commemoration of Our Lady of Lourdes. People around the world take time to pray for the sick and those who work hard to alleviate the sufferings of the sick on this day. Faith-organizations mark this day especially, to provide the sick with medicines, food, and spiritual guidance. Let us all be solicitous towards the plight of our sick and suffering brethren in our parishes and, above all, in our own families, and make it a point to care for them and alleviate their pain and suffering as much as we can.

**5. WORLD MARRIAGE DAY**

We celebrate World Marriage Day on **11 February 2024** to proclaim the value of Marriage, as permanent, faithful and fruitful bond, not just to spouses and children, but all families, the Church, and the whole world. According to Pope Francis, Marriage is a “Call to the ‘Joy of Love’ and ‘Joy of the Church.’” World Marriage Day highlights the promise of a marital union and the beauty of being a lawfully wedded

couple under the eyes of Christ. It is an initiative that aims to improve the married life of struggling couples. The day propagates the ethos of marriage and honors the sacrifices and faithfulness of husbands and wives. On this day, let us specially offer our prayers for all married couples in the parishes so that they may experience true joy in their married life and also promote the good of their children and family.

## **6. ANNUAL FEAST OF ST LAWRENCE BASILICA**

The six days of festivities of St Lawrence Basilica which began with traditional gaiety, prayer and solemnity on 21 January 2024 were concluded on 26 January 2024 with great joy and gratitude, thanks to the continuous protection of St Lawrence, the wonder-worker, and incessant mercy and blessings of God, our Heavenly Father. While the six-day celebrations which were meticulously planned by the Shrine Basilica Management Committee, the flow of devotees and pilgrims was so peaceful, devotional and reverential. St Lawrence truly worked wonders in Attur attracting pilgrims more than our expectation this year.

A word of gratitude to Msgr Ferdinand Gonsalves, our Vicar General, for being present at the Basilica for six days and for overseeing all the arrangements and celebrations. I offer my sincere thanks to Very Rev. Fr Alban D'Souza, Rector of St Lawrence Basilica, Rev. Rev. Fr Larry Franklin Pinto, Assistant Priest, Rev. Fr Roman Mascarenhas, Spiritual Director, and members of the Attur PFC and PPC for their all-out efforts and dedication before, during as well as after the celebrations; the five Deans of our deaneries and their deanery priests – diocesan and religious for their presence, support and, above all, service at the confessional; the clergy of the diocese of Mangalore and from our neighbouring dioceses and the religious priests from various congregations for helping us at the confessional; Rev. Deacons (diocesan and religious) for helping at the liturgical celebrations; seminarians and

post-novices for their continuous presence and assistance at the shrine. May God bless you, all, and may St Lawrence intercede for you always.

## **7. DECENNIAL CELEBRATION OF *UZWAAD***

The decennial year celebration of '*Uzwaad*' was held on 28 January 2024 at Milagres College grounds, Kallianpur. *Uzwaad* began as a monthly and was later transformed into a fortnightly. I congratulate, appreciate and thank the editor, Rev. Fr Alwyn Sequeira, OCD, and his team for organising the celebrations in befitting manner with meticulous planning and execution. The presence of large number of priests, religious and the lay faithful added glitter and joy to the celebration. I also remain grateful to the former editors, Rev. Fr Chetan Lobo, OFMCap and Rev. Fr Royson Ferandes for shouldering the responsibility of editing the fortnightly with their dedication and hard work and making this fortnightly popular with inspiring and thought-provoking contents. I thank all the trustees of Deepa Trust for shouldering the responsibility of its publication. In this decennial year, let us adopt *Uzwaad*'s motto for every family so that each family in the diocese subscribes to this fortnightly. Let us encourage the faithful in this regard in all parishes of the Diocese.

## **8. BIBLE READING IN FAMILIES**

As part of the Year of Prayer 2024, Divya Jyothi has printed and distributed booklets to all families in the Diocese indicating scriptural passages for promoting and assisting the daily reading of the Bible. "The word of God is at the basis of all authentic Christian spirituality. The Synod Fathers thus took up the words of the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei verbum*: "Let the faithful go gladly to the sacred text itself, whether in the sacred liturgy, which is full of the divine words, or in devout reading, or in such suitable exercises and various other helps which, with the approval and guidance of the pastors of the Church,

are happily spreading everywhere in our day. Let them remember, however, that prayer should accompany the reading of sacred Scripture” (*Verbum Domini*, #86). I urge all parish priests to support this initiative and announce the same to your parishioners so that all families in the Diocese read the Word of God daily and thus nourish their Christian life with the Word of God.

## **9. CBCI GENERAL BODY MEETING**

The 36th CBCI General Body Meeting is held from 31st January to 7th February 2024 at St John’s National Academy of Health Sciences, Bangalore on the theme ‘**Church’s Response to the Current Socio - Political Situation in the Country and the Benefits and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence.**’ Let us pray for all the participants in this meeting as all the bishops of three *sui iuris* Churches of India gather to deliberate on an important and most relevant topic that affects all the citizens of our country. May the discussions and the resolutions of the meeting bring about abundant fruits for the Indian Church.

## **10. NEW BISHOP OF KARWAR DIOCESE**

The Holy Father appointed the Rev. Fr. Duming Dias of the clergy of the Diocese of Shimoga as Bishop of Karwar on 13 January 2024. Bishop-Elect Duming Dias was born on 13 September 1969 in Honavar, in the Diocese of Karwar. He did his Bachelor of Philosophy in St Peter’s Pontifical Seminary, Bengaluru and Bachelor of Theology in St Joseph’s Inter- diocesan Seminary, Mangalore. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Bangalore University, Bachelor of Education from Kuvempu University, Shimoga, Master of Education and Master of Business Administration from Karnataka State Open University.

He was ordained a priest on 6 May 1997 for the Clergy of Shimoga. He has held the following positions: Assistant Parish Priest of the Sacred

Heart Cathedral in Shimoga (1997-1998); Assistant Parish Priest of St. Thomas in Davanagere (1998-1999); parish priest of St. Francis Xavier in Kable (1999-2001); Director of the Biblical, Catechesis and Liturgy Commission (2001-2012); Teacher and Principal of Sacred Heart College in Shimoga (2002-2012); parish priest of Mary Immaculate in New Town Bhadravathi (2002-2007); Director of the Lourdes Boys School in Davanagere (2012-2014); Director of the SCC Commission and Coordinator of the Diocesan Commissions of Shimoga (2012-2014); Associate Director of St. John's Medical College in Bangalore (2014-2021); Coordinator of the Diocesan Commissions and Director of the Commission for the Family (from 2021); since 2021, Director of Sannidhi Pastoral Renewal Center in Shimoga. We congratulate Msgr Duming Dias on his appointment as the new Bishop of Karwar and offer our best wishes and prayers as he embarks on the journey of pastoral care and governance of the Diocese of Karwar.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

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+ **Gerald Isaac Lobo**

## **DIOCESAN (MEDICAL) HEALTH FUND**

“In as much as you have done it to one of the least of my brethren,  
you did it to me”. (Mt 25:40)

Dear Rev. Father/Rev. Sister,

Greetings of love and peace.

From the time of its establishment, the Diocese of Udupi has been focusing on the all-round development of its faithful in spiritual, social and economic spheres through its Pastoral Plan- Mission 2025. The Health Commission of the Diocese specially works for the promotion of awareness in health care among the faithful in all parishes and provide support to the needy in meeting the expenses of medical care. In addition, all Catholic families are encouraged and motivated to tap government schemes and get maximum benefits from them.

Despite our efforts, people below the poverty line still find it difficult to have access to health care. When they face major ailments like heart disease, cancer, kidney failure, they do knock on the door of the Diocese. They face financial difficulties when they must undergo major operations and pay hospital bills and meet bills of expensive medicines. Keeping this in mind, during the decennial celebration of our Diocese, it was decided to start a health fund at the diocesan level to assist the poor and needy patients. We also appealed to the people of good will and parishes to contribute generously towards this fund.

Through last year's Lenten campaign, we could collect a sum of rupees seventy-five lakhs. We truly remain grateful for your cooperation in this Lenten campaign. Only when a large amount is accumulated in this fund, we can utilize the interest from this fund to help the deserving patients.

This year too, the Lenten Campaign will be utilised to collect funds to the Diocesan Health Fund. Soon SAMPADA office will make arrangements to send you the lucky-dip coupons. I earnestly request you to motivate your parishioners to buy more lucky-dip coupons this year and help in building Diocesan Health fund. In addition, kindly motivate the parishioners to donate generously in their personal capacity to this noble cause. They may send their donations directly to the following Account:

Account No : **01102010100521**  
Bank : **Canara Bank**  
Branch : **Catholic Centre, Udupi**  
IFSC : **CNRB0010110**

I sincerely thank all of you for your cooperation in building the Diocesan (Medical) Health Fund. May God bless you.

Yours in Christ,

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✘ **Gerald Isaac Lobo**  
Bishop of Udupi

## COMMUNICATION FROM PASTORAL COMMISSIONS

### 1. COMMISSION FOR BEC's

- 02.02.2024 - DAT Meeting  
11.02.2024 - Samudai Day at Perampally Parish  
18.02.2024 - Third Method of Gospel Sharing , Udupi  
Deanery - Group 1  
25.02.2024 - Third method of Gospel Sharing, Udupi  
Deanery - Group 2

**Rev. Fr Harold Pereira**  
*Director*

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### OBITUARY

**Mr Lawrence D'Souza** (79 Yrs), F/o Rev. Fr Edwin D'Souza, Parish Priest, St Francis Assisi Church, Tallur, passed away on 03 January 2024 and the funeral was held on 06 January 2024 at St Joseph the Worker Church, Neermarga, Mangalore Diocese.

**Mrs Remedina D'Souza** (80 Yrs), M/o Rev. Fr Wilson D'Souza, Parish Priest, St Antony Church, Kuntalnagar, passed away on 18 January 2024 and the funeral was held on 20 January 2024 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Nakre.

**May God grant them eternal rest**  
**Our heartfelt condolences to dear Rev. Fathers**

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